

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY  
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee was held on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 4:30 pm in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

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**PRESENT:** Chair Erickson, Kerry Metoxen, Joan Brusky, Ed Koslowski, Duane Pierce, Joe Aulik, Jim Haskins, Ken Corry, Louise Dahlke

**EXCUSED:** Jerry Polus

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**1. Call Meeting to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Erickson at 4:30 pm.

**2. Approve/Modify Agenda.**

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Jim Haskins to approve. Vote taken. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**3. Approve/Modify Minutes of November 19, 2019.**

Motion made by Ed Koslowski, seconded by Duane Pierce to approve. Vote taken. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**4. Invocation.**

Jim Haskins gave the invocation at this time.

**5. Update re: Honor Rewards Program.**

CVSO Joe Aulik informed there have not be any changes with regard to the Honor Rewards Program. Ken Corry commented that several other counties in Wisconsin are now participating in the program after seeing Brown County participating.

**6. Discussion Regarding Veterans Appreciation Day Theme for 2020.**

Chair Erickson asked for ideas and suggestions for a group to honor at the 2020 Veterans Appreciation Day at the Fair event. Ed Koslowski suggested honoring spouses and families or whoever the support system or caregiver for the veteran is. Jim Haskins and Ken Corry liked this idea. Erickson said if we chose to honor spouses and family, we could eliminate the dog tags and just go with certificates.

Koslowski also reminded that we need to start looking for a band about six months before the event. Erickson mentioned the possibility of contacting Aaron Jones from the Packers to be the guest speaker as he should be in town for training camp. Both of Jones' parents were in the military and Erickson wanted to put this out as a possibility as he has seen Jones supporting veterans in various ways.

**7. Report from CVSO Joe Aulik.**

Aulik said he is going to the VVA meeting later tonight to talk about Agent Orange. He said that 2019 was a good year for his office and they topped \$2.1 million dollars in retro payments to veterans. They continue to work on outreach and have been working with several TV stations and radio stations and are also looking at some grant opportunities. He noted they received a donation of about \$3500 from Brightening Veterans Lives and they will be using that donation for marketing.

**8. Report from Committee Members Present (Erickson, Brusky, Corry, Dahlke, Haskins, Koslowski, Metoxen, Pierce, Polus).**

-Erickson informed he has chosen not to run for County Board Supervisor for the 2020 – 2022 term and he will be stepping down. The chairmanship of this Subcommittee has always been a County Board member with a military background. Erickson knows of one current Supervisor who may be able to be the Chair, but if that does not work out, Erickson would consider staying on as the Chair of this Subcommittee. He will keep this group advised in this regard.

Erickson also informed he is currently reading a book about the Indianapolis, the military ship that was sunk in WWII. So far it has been a good book and he recommends it. He concluded by saying he has a number of Time-Life books on WWII that he is looking to get rid of and it was suggested that he contact the Center for Veterans Issues or some other veterans organization.

-Brusky did not have anything to report.

-Corry informed he is involved in a number of community issues and one of his main focuses is homeless veterans and veterans' suicide. He noted that as of January 14 there are 13 homeless veterans in Brown County. Of those, seven are eligible for VA services and six are not eligible for any VA services. Those not eligible for VA services would be able to apply for Section 8 housing, but the problem is there is a lack of low income housing. Haskins asked if tiny houses would be something that could be considered. Corry said he has talked about that with Aulik but the tiny house program is labor intensive because someone has to run the program. Koslowski said his concern with tiny houses is that it may lead some of the veterans using them to become shut ins and that concerns him. Erickson suggested Corry talk to Planning Director Chuck Lamine about this because there is some housing that goes through the Planning Department.

Corry said when grants or funds are received from outside the county, the county has to accept people from other counties who come here for help so people tend to come from other counties. If the funding was strictly from the county, the services could be limited to county residents only. Corry would like to do whatever can be done to take care of our own veterans here in Brown County. He just wanted to bring to light the number of homeless veterans here. The homeless vets are going between NEW Community Shelter, St. Johns, and Pillars in Appleton. Mental health and AODA are very big issues when dealing with the homeless and it was noted that NEW Community Shelter is very strict about this. Aulik noted that if you get in NEW Community Shelter on the veterans floor you can stay up to two years.

Corry continued that in 2019 there were 39 suicides and, of those, 8 were veterans. Veterans make up about 8 percent of the population of Brown County, but they make up about 20 percent of the suicides. He added that for every suicide there are also a number of attempts. Women will attempt suicide more than men, but are less successful because of the means they use. Haskins also referenced the new suicide hotline that will be launching soon. Corry said the Suicide Coalition meets the first Wednesday of each month at 2:00 pm at Rasmussen College if anyone is interested in attending.

Corry also informed veterans will receive free admission to the RV and Camping Show this Friday. Aulik said his office will have a benefit table set up at the show.

Corry concluded by saying that each year members of the Greater Green Bay Chamber pick a project to raise funds for and give back to the community and this year they chose to create a veterans trailer that will be wrapped with all the veterans service organization in Brown County along with phone numbers of the crisis hotline, the CVSO number and the homeless hotline. Veterans groups will be able to rent the trailer out for events for a small fee.

-Dahlke informed the Fair Association will meet tomorrow night and she has advised them that Aulik would like to attend a meeting so they will try to set that up for March. They will be trying to convince the Fair Association to get rid of the paper tickets and base their numbers on the number of tickets that are distributed for the door prizes.

-Haskins did not have much to report, other than that UPS hires more veterans than anyone else.

-Koslowski reported the UPS Society President's Day Dinner will take place on February 16, starting at 1:00 pm at The Woods. The cost is \$15.00 per person. He explained the UPS Society is made up of representatives of all the local veterans groups in the greater Green Bay area and anyone is welcome to attend the dinner.

Koslowski also talked about veteran displays and noted that Dahlke informed he could set up a larger display at the Fair, however, Koslowski will not be able to do that because his trailer and truck will already be full. He noted that he did set up a display at the bank on Cardinal Lane this year for AMVETS and that post was awarded \$1000 for the display. He also did a display at Associated Bank on the corner of Fisk and W. Mason Street. He asked Aulik if he would want to have a month long display at that bank next year. Aulik said he could put a table together with some information for veterans. Koslowski shared pictures of the displays he set up. Displays are set up during the month of November, so there is plenty of time for Aulik to think about this.

Koslowski also talked about the heroes' breakfasts that are held at the Center for Veterans Issues which is located in the old Northwest Engineering building on Walnut Street. Entry is through the back door and they are in Room 202. Some necessities like food and gloves are also available at the breakfasts, the next of which will be held on January 30. Additional dates for the breakfasts are February 13, February 27, March 12 and March 26.

Koslowski indicated that a friend of his wants to do an interview of a D Day Normandy Beach survivor. Aulik suggested he contact John Maino to see if he knows of anyone. Erickson also noted that there is a WWII vet named Robert Reeners that he thinks was a D Day Normandy Beach survivor.

-Metoxen reported their best year for retro payments was 2017 and one recipient got a payment of \$480,000 that went all the way back to 1997. Metoxen also talked about homeless veterans and said they are fortunate to be one of 20 Tribes in the country who got 20 vouchers for housing. They are currently using 18 of the vouchers. Metoxen also talked about someone who was looking for veteran benefits but lied about being a veteran. They have had this issue one other time in the past and it is disheartening. Aulik said he has also come across this in the past. Metoxen continued that he and Aulik were on a forum for State VSOs and they talked about someone who won a case for a veteran who had cancer and contaminated water at Fort Mc Coy factored into it.

-Pierce informed AMVETS is doing their biggest meat raffle of the year on February 8 at 2:00 pm at Harbor Lights Bar in Suamico. There will also be a shotgun raffled off at the event as well as a carved fish. Pierce also reminded that on Friday mornings from 8:00 am – noon Festival Foods on University Avenue has free coffee and donuts for veterans in their upstairs break room.

9. **Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law. None.**

10. **Adjourn.**

**Motion made by Joan Brusky, seconded by Ken Corry to adjourn at 5:21 pm. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio  
Administrative Specialist